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Addysg a Gwella Iechyd
Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Less than Full Time (LTFT) Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 All trainee doctors and dentists can request to work Less Than Full Time (LTFT).
- 1.2 This handbook should be read in conjunction with the most recent version of the [Gold guide](#).
- 1.3 We have revised this policy to align with feedback from the pilot policy run in 2023.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance on the LTFT process in Wales outlining eligibility criteria, application process and stakeholder responsibilities.
- 2.2 This policy is not for those wishing to compress full-time hours into fewer days, instead they should contact NWSSP (or alternative employing organisation) and their Host Organisation to discuss.

3. Eligibility

3.1 Employment legislation and the Gold Guide do not set a priority order around eligibility. The only requirement to train LTFT being a well-founded individual reason.

However, new applications will be assigned with one or more of the following broad categories:

- Trainees with a disability or ill health
- Trainees with caring responsibilities (children, partner, other relative)
- Welfare and wellbeing
- Unique opportunities
- Religious commitment
- Non-medical development
- Flexibility in their training programme (by moving to less than full-time training enables development of a broader career portfolio).

3.2 All LTFT applications will be treated positively by HEIW and accommodated wherever possible.

3.3 When considering applications; HEIW, the training programme and host organisation will consider training capacity within the programme, curriculum requirements for all trainees within the specialty, service delivery and funding implications prior to agreeing the application. This could result in a delay in starting LTFT and may require flexibility or a change to the preferred working pattern.

3.4 Where demand for LTFT exceeds training capacity or resource, those with a disability/ill health or caring responsibilities will be accommodated first.

3.5 Trainees appointed to LAT posts may apply for LTFT training and must complete the process in the same way. There is no entitlement to an extension of the fixed term period of training on a pro rata basis.

4. LTFT placements

There are two types of placements for LTFT trainees:

- Slot sharing
- Reduced hours in a full-time post.

4.1 Slot Sharing

4.1.1 The overriding principles of slot sharing are the same across all specialties. However, your specialty, depending on size and rota organisation may differ in how the slot shares are configured.

4.1.2 HEIW provides the host organisation with top-up funding for LTFT slot shares to a maximum of 20% of the basic salary. This funding is prospectively agreed with the Director of Secondary Care, prior to LTFT approval.

4.1.3 Your TPD will look at creating a slot share by considering the existing number of LTFT trainees and how the rotation can be configured given funding constraints.

Examples of slot shares include:

- two trainees share one full-time post e.g. (2 x 0.6)**
- three trainees share two posts e.g. (3 x 0.6), (3 x 0.7)*, OR (2 x 0.6 + 1 x 0.8)
- four trainees share three posts (4 x 0.7)

4.1.4 You and your slot share partner would manage any out-of-hours arrangements for the Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) post(s) between you.

4.1.5 Slot sharing should not be confused with job sharing which normally restricts the post holders to work 50% of a full-time post.

4.1.6 Due to limits on the funding available to support LTFT training, HEIW may not be able to support all slot share proposals. Where this occurs, alternative options will be explored with everyone concerned and if applicable you will be placed on a waiting list maintained by HEIW.

4.1.7 It is recognised that LTFT trainee slot share partners could change throughout the course of the training programme. Where it is not possible for trainees to start on the same date a brief gap may be feasible, if the service is able to accommodate this. Reasonable steps will be taken by HEIW, and the Host Organisation, to accommodate the needs of the remaining slot share partner, whilst trying to fill the vacant proportion of the training slot.

**Slot sharing arrangements do not apply to GPs in practice posts but only apply to them when they are working in secondary care posts. On occasion, GP trainees slot share with secondary care trainees within hospital placements, slot shares between primary and secondary care trainees should be maximised wherever possible.

4.2 Reduced Sessions in a Full-Time Post

4.2.1 A trainee occupies an established full-time post but works reduced hours.

5. Application process and timescales

5.1 Application routes

There are **four routes** in which a trainee can apply to change their Whole Time Equivalent (WTE):

Application Windows

There are two application windows every year which run in February and August.

Application Window	For LTFT start date between:
1 st February to 28 th /29 th February	1 st August and 31 st January
1 st August to 31 st August	1 st February and 31 st July

Trainees will receive notification of the outcome of their application no more than 12 weeks after the window has closed.

Exceptional Circumstances

Trainees who have sudden ill health or sudden caring responsibility or are returning to training are eligible to apply through the exceptional route. HEIW will try to process all exceptional applications within 8 weeks.

Doctors in the recruitment system

This application route is for trainees who have accepted an offer to train in Wales and wish to go LTFT at the point of commencing in post. All trainees will receive written correspondence from HEIW advising them of the window in which they must apply for LTFT. HEIW will try to process all applications within 8 weeks, however trainees may be required to be flexible on the start date of LTFT.

Increase in hours

Trainees can request to increase their hours at any point in their training programme. HEIW will try to process all applications within 8 weeks.

5.2 All applications must be received by HEIW on the official digital form which can be accessed on the [HEIW website](#).

5.3 Prior to applying, trainees should consider the impact of reducing/increasing their Whole Time Equivalent on both their salary and on their Training Programme. Following a successful LTFT application HEIW will automatically adjust the trainees end of programme date to reflect the indicative time requirements of the training programme. Any requests to bring forward the end of the training date will need to be considered as part of the [acceleration of training process](#).

5.4 Trainees must discuss their plans with their Training Programme Director (TPD) to understand how it could affect their future training/rotations, recruitment timelines and length of the training programme. Applications will not progress without a formal discussion taking place.

5.5 There is no requirement to renew your LTFT status as your application stands throughout the training programme/placements. If you wish to decrease/increase your hours, then a new application must be completed.

6. Requirements for LTFT Placements

6.1 The training programme for LTFT trainees should contain the same educational opportunities as a full-time trainee. LTFT trainees are expected to work pro rata of what full-time colleagues work in the same department, including evening, night, and weekend shifts.

6.2 Working patterns may differ between host organisations and specialties and may, where applicable, depend on reasonable adjustment recommendations from occupational health. Trainees' preferences of working days cannot be guaranteed, and flexibility may be required. Host organisations will contact trainees where preferences cannot be accommodated.

6.3 Trainees in Wales are required to undertake no less than 50% of full-time training in line with the [GMC's recommendation](#). Trainees can therefore work 50% to 90% of the WTE and nothing outside of this (working at 65, 75 or 85% are not workable with Rota designs).

7. Trainee responsibilities

7.1 Trainees should contact their TPD at the earliest opportunity to discuss their intention to train LTFT.

7.2 Trainees should submit their new LTFT application in accordance with the requirements and timescales as detailed above.

7.3 The trainee is responsible for ensuring the correct contact details are on the Intrepid database via the self-service function for HEIW to contact them.

7.4 Once the application has been agreed by HEIW, trainees should consult with the Rota coordinator and slot share partner, where applicable, to agree working arrangements including working days.

7.5 Host organisations require all days of the week to be covered on call. Flexibility will be required by trainees working LTFT around days of work to accommodate service needs. This will vary between specialties and trainees should discuss this prior to their application, so expectation around out of hours working is transparent.

7.6 Trainees must understand that the process for agreeing LTFT training involves negotiation between all relevant parties ensuring the requirements of the relevant curricular are met by the agreed pro-rata basis and that services can be delivered and maintained.

7.7 Secondary care trainees should use the 3 monthly Educational Supervisor (ES) appraisal to give feedback on the LTFT educational requirements and training plan and where the trainee is in relation to whole time equivalent training. The Educational Supervisors Report should contain a paragraph outlining that the placement has met the educational needs of the trainee and fed back to the TPD. GP trainees should follow their usual requirements for educational review.

8. HEIW Responsibilities

8.1 HEIW is responsible for ensuring that all LTFT training posts and programmes have been approved by the GMC.

8.2 HEIW will work with Programme Directors, NWSSP and Host organisations to agree and confirm arrangements for LTFT placements.

8.3 HEIW will manage the LTFT process ensuring key information is shared with relevant stakeholders (i.e. the trainee, TPD, Medical Staffing, GP Practice Manager, Finance and HEIW teams) in line with the GDPR policy.

8.4 HEIW will review any LTFT application that has been refused at any stage of the process and consider solutions with all stakeholders.

9. TPD responsibilities

9.1 TPDs are responsible for promoting a positive culture and approach to LTFT across their specialty.

9.2 TPDs are expected to consider all applications and requirements to train LTFT alongside the requests of all other trainees on the programme. They are required to use the most appropriate configuration of people and posts to maximise the training opportunities and minimise the impact on service delivery.

9.3 TPDs are required to monitor the educational needs of the trainee and to implement a support plan where any concerns are identified.

10. Host/Employing Organisation responsibilities.

10.1 Host organisations are expected to treat LTFT trainees no differently from full-time trainees and in accordance with the policies and procedures of the employer.

10.2 Host organisations will review all applications for LTFT training and confirm to HEIW within the agreed timeframe whether the requests can be accommodated. Existing LTFT trainees will be agreed prior to new applicant requests.

10.3 Host organisations will consult with trainees to agree and finalise working patterns after the application has been approved.

11. LTFT and ARCP requirements

11.1 All trainees need to meet the requirements for progression in training as set out by GMC approved curricula for training.

11.2 LTFT trainees should have an ARCP not less than annually but at intervals of no more than 15 months*. LTFT trainees may need an additional ARCP at a transition point in the curriculum to determine progression to the next stage/grade. All LTFT trainees should use an LTFT calculator to keep track of their training time and expected training completion date.

* GP trainees should follow the LTFT ARCP guidance outlined by the [RCGP](#).

11.2 LTFT trainees are expected to undertake the requirements for assessment as set in their relevant curricula on a pro rata basis and to spread the balance of workplace-based assessments evenly.

11.3 For LTFT trainees, any extension to training following an ARCP Outcome 3, will be calculated pro rata on the equivalent basis of a full-time trainee. If the outcome is for exam failure a fixed-term extension until the next exam sitting should be issued.

12. LTFT, Study Leave & Educational Development Time

12.1 LTFT trainees have a pro-rata entitlement to the number of study leave days per year for their specialty.

12.2 LTFT trainees can access the full study leave funding allocation for their specialty per year in line with their peers. The study leave funding allocation is not pro-rata in line with the trainees %WTE.

12.3 LTFT trainees have a pro-rata entitlement to educational development time.

13. Acting Up as a Consultant and the Period of Grace (does not apply to GP trainees)

13.1 As for all trainees, LTFT trainees may apply for a consultant post and can be interviewed up to six months prior to their anticipated CCT date; this is on a fixed-term basis and not pro rata.

13.2 The period of acting up will be equivalent, pro rata, to the three months available to full-time trainees. This requires completion of HEIW's [Acting Up](#) as a Consultant form.

13.3 The maximum duration of the period of grace is 6 months, which is on a fixed term basis and not pro rata.

14. Tier 2 VISA Holders

14.1 One of the eligibility points for a Tier 2 Visa application is that the salary is paid at or above 'the appropriate rate for the job' as set out by the UK Visa and Immigration ('Immigration Rules Appendix J: codes of practice for skilled work.'). This threshold must be met throughout the duration of the sponsorship for the visa to remain valid.

14.2 It is the responsibility of the trainee to ensure the LTFT hours of work they request meet this threshold. Any changes in contracted hours and salary must be reported to the trainees' Sponsor as soon as they have been approved.

15. Locum work

15.1 LTFT doctors can work locum shifts in the same way as full-time workers. They should inform their TPD of their intention to work locum shifts and record these on their Form R at ARCP, as these shifts are outside of their agreed LTFT working pattern. GP trainees should inform their GP ES.

15.2 As detailed in the [COPMED Guidance for Undertaking Additional Work](#) as an LTFT trainee, 'repetitive additional work should lead to a review of the LTFT training schedule'. LTFT for health reasons and burnout/wellbeing is unlikely to support additional working.

15.3 All additional work that requires a license to practice including locum shifts must be declared to the Responsible Officer and should be declared on the Form R. This includes any extra periods of duty in the normal place of work beyond contracted hours. This is outlined in The Gold Guide section 3.117.

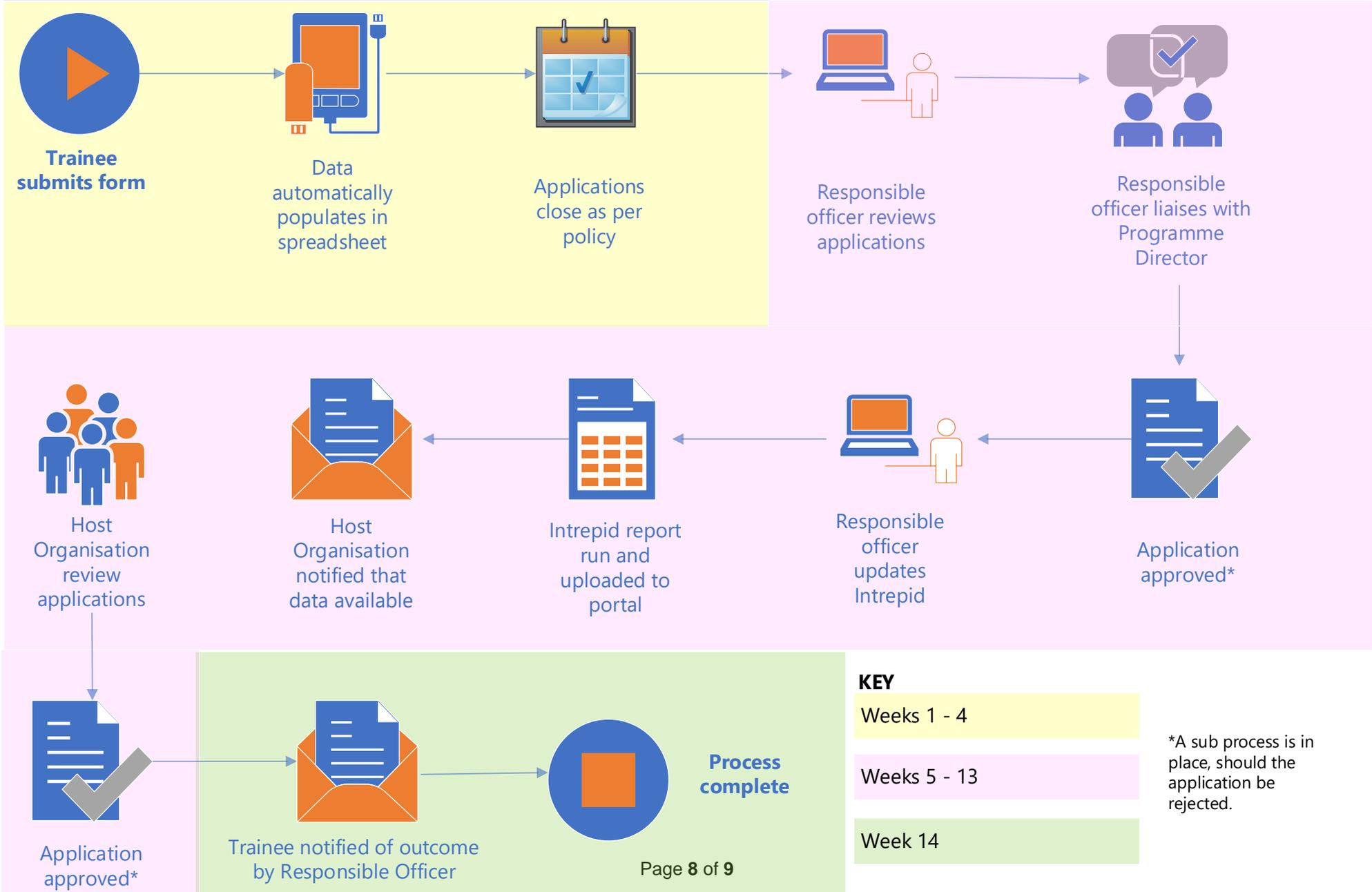
16. Appeals

16.1 If a trainee wishes to appeal an application refusal, they must send an email outlining their circumstance to flexibletrg@wales.nhs.uk

16.2 The trainee will be contacted by the Director of Secondary Care or Deputy to review the appeal and find a solution.

16.3 HEIW are not responsible for the host organisations' refusal to accommodate LTFT. We will take all reasonable measures to address the appeal with all parties and look at alternative solutions to try and accommodate the application.

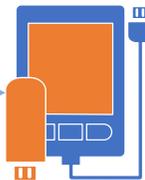
Window Application



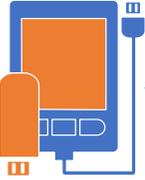
Exceptional Circumstances / New Trainee / Increase to LTFT applications



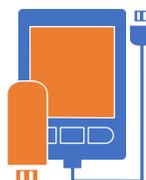
Trainee submits form



System automatically notifies Responsible Officers of new application (via email)



System automatically notifies trainee of receipt of application (via email)



Data automatically populates in spreadsheet



Within 2 weeks

Responsible officer reviews applications

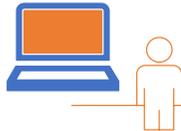


Within 2 weeks

Host Organisation notified of application to review



LTFT Officer monitors trackers



Responsible officer updates tracker



Within 2 weeks

Application approved*



Responsible officer liaises with Programme Director



Host Organisation review applications



Within 2 weeks

Application approved*

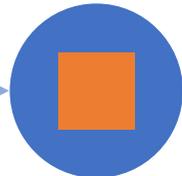


Responsible officer updates Intrepid



Within 8 weeks of application

Trainee notified of outcome by LTFT Officer



Process complete

*A sub process is in place, should the application be rejected.